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THE TRANSMETROPOLITAN

free

#5 REVIEW

MAN IS TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH HIMSELF, WITH HIS OWN PAST, HIS OWN AIMS AND HIS OWN CULTURE. REALITY STRIKES HIM AS EXHAUSTED; HIS SPACE FLIGHTS PROVE IT. WOMAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, INSISTS THAT LIFE MUST YET BEGIN FOR HER ON OUR OWN PLANET. SHE CAN STILL SEE THINGS WHERE MAN NO LONGER SEES ANYTHING. THE MALE MIND ENTERED A FINAL CRISIS THE MOMENT A MECHANISM WAS SET INTO MOTION WHICH HAS JEOPARDIZED THE VERY SURVIVAL OF HUMANKIND. WOMAN COMES OF AGE BY RECOGNIZING THE MOTOR FORCE OF THIS INSANE DANGER IN THE PATRIARCH'S CHARACTER STRUCTURE AND IN HIS CULTURE.

-CARLA LONZI, 1977

- an anarchist newspaper -

featuring

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what is anarchism?

Anarchists are people who, in a century where freedom of opinion is preached everywhere, have believed it to be their right and duty to appeal for unlimited liberty. Throughout the world there are a few thousand of us, maybe a few million, for we have no merit other than saying out loud what the crowd is thinking. We are a few million workers who claim absolute liberty, nothing but liberty, every liberty.

We want liberty; we claim for every human being the right to do whatever they please and the means by which to do it. A person has the right to satisfy all their needs completely, with no limit other than natural impossibilities and the needs of their neighbours, which must be respected equally with their own.

We want freedom, and we believe its existence incompatible with the existence of any power whatsoever, no matter what its origin and form, no matter whether it be elected or imposed, monarchist or republican, inspired by divine right, popular right, holy oil, or universal suffrage.

History teaches us that every government is like every other government and that all are worth the same. **The best are the worst.** In some there is more cynicism, in others more hypocrisy, but at bottom there are always the same procedures, always the same intolerance. There is no government, including even the ones that appear the most liberal, which does not have in the dust of its legislative arsenals some good little law about the Anarchist International to use against inconvenient opposition.

Evil, in the eyes of anarchists, does not dwell in one form of government more than any other. Evil lies in the idea of government itself. The principle of authority is evil.

Our ideal for human relations is to substitute free contract, perpetually open to revision or cancellation, in place of administrative and legal guardianship and imposed discipline.

Anarchists propose teaching people to do without government as they are already learning to do without God.

Anarchists will also teach people to get along without private ownership. Indeed, the worst tyrant is not the one who locks you up; it is the one who starves you. The worst tyrant is not the one who takes you by the collar; it is the one who takes you by the belly.

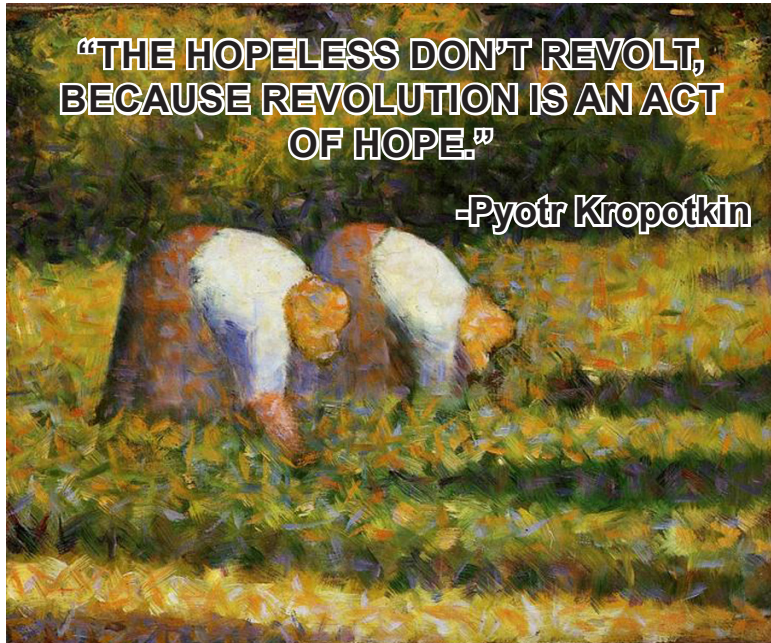
No liberty without equality! There is no liberty in a society where capital is monopolized in the hands of an increasingly smaller minority, in a society where nothing is divided equally, not even public education, which is paid for by everyone's money.

We believe that capital is the common patrimony of mankind because it is the fruit of the collaboration between past and present generations, and that it ought to be put at the disposal of everyone so that no

one is excluded and no one can hoard one part of it to the detriment of others. Once this capital is distributed, we wish to destroy capital forever.

In a word, what we want is equality. We want actual equality as the corollary of liberty, indeed as its essential preliminary condition. **From each according to their abilities; to each according to their needs.**

That is what we want; that is what our energies are devoted to. It is what shall be, because no limitation can prevail against claims that are both legitimate and necessary. That is why the government wishes to discredit us. Scoundrels that we are, we claim bread for all, knowledge for all, freedom for all, independence and justice for all.



CONTINUED FROM PG. 5

ry in some Amerindian people, a memory that was not dispelled even where the people in question were exterminated. According to popular opinion, the White Man is a vulgar being, a senseless, narcissistic liar, a ferocious hypocrite hungry for profit and ignorant of all that surrounds him and for whom nothing is sacred. He is a criminal, a defiler, a nihilist, a moron, and wretch to the point of profusion. By giving themselves a degenerate on the scale of Donald Trump for president of "the Western Hemisphere," the citizens of the United States have insisted on making this truth a brilliant fact, and for some a blinding one.

7. Across the world, the juridico-formal edifice of the State is in the process of being dismantled and replaced by the unique criteria of police work, mainly that of efficacy (which coincides—and not by chance—with the ideal of management). Where ends are lacking, what plausible goal remains other than an infinite intensification of pure means? Soviet-style purges, repression with live ammunition, mass incarceration, the "war on terror," states of emergency, "immigration politics," shameless propaganda, the "war on drugs," paramilitary and citizen massacres, liquidation of opposing forces with no explanation given: what we are seeing is not a "state of exception become the norm," but a certain mode of governmentality that is spreading at high speed across the world. Duterte, the "Philippino Trump," who proposes extra-judicial executions in the streets of his country as the measure of effectivity of his politics, and encourages the citizenry to join in the bloodbath with enthusiasm, indicates a path as well as a new paradigm for the exercise of power, one entirely in "transgression." Obviously, the most unsettling part of the Filipino paradigm is that there are still human rights groups publicly asking themselves if we might not be "exiting the rule of law."

8. Western civilization has not finished finishing. All this is of a piece with the torture it has inflicted on itself for more than a century, such that even its most fanatical partisans can no longer stand it. Voting for Donald Trump was an immense gesture of "let's have done with it!", literally, to prefer a frightening end over an endless fear. A certain Calvinist taste for the apocalypse is expressed here, alongside the properly Western desire for catastrophe—a way of giving in to vertigo, a cessation of self-restraint, a need for a decisive confrontation, or, to put it in theological terms, a rupture of the catechism whose effects will be felt well beyond the United States.

9. Since its birth in Ancient Greece, democracy has worked essentially to ward-off civil war—the civil war that gave birth to it and by which it maintains itself, but also civil war as the ultimate reality of the coexistence between different forms-of-life, human and non-human. From Athens on, external warfare has been the most banal method of warding off this internecine war. It is one of the

marks of democracy that it treats its enemies as "enemies of civilization," as "barbarians," "monsters," "criminals," and more recently as "terrorists"—in short, to eject its enemies from "humanity." It is this way of conducting war that Trump has "brought back home," that he has dragged back to the center of classical politics, by treating Hillary Clinton not as an adversary with whom one debates but as a "criminal" to be sent to prison. Thus we see democracy, once again, as the continuation of war by other means. Among distinguished people, it has of late been customary to speak of "pacification" rather than counter-insurrection. This is clearly no longer the case. If democracy is essentially that form of civil war that consists in denying civil war, there are some citizens in the United States who would like for it to visibly appear as what it essentially is. This is one of the first steps taken by democracy in America off the path anticipated by Tocqueville, the precedent for which was, in this sense, Russia.

10. If Trump's victory appears so plainly as the revenge of those defeated in the American Civil War of the 1860s, the danger is great that, as this event brings into view for many the subterranean continuum of civil war, that it will nonetheless be grasped as a lamentable scourge rather than a fact to be taken on. Beyond the puppet-like character of the United States presidency, this election may still serve as an invitation for vengeance, a carte blanche to the police to slaughter as many Blacks and leftists as they wish. It is always difficult to forgive one's victims for all the evil one has inflicted upon them. And it is true that the partisans of Trump seem, by and large, to be well-armed. But it is also imaginable that the obvious madness of this new government could bring it face-to-face with a new war of secession along a reversed front, that the illegitimacy of the new powers could nourish an infinite fragmentation of the national territory – an end to the United States of America – where the multiplication of militias would necessitate the multiplication of communes. What is fundamentally ineligible in the character of Donald Trump could, by contact, destroy the function that he is supposed to occupy and the system in which this function is inscribed. The aberration reigning at the center could bring about the end of all centrality. No longer a State, only those territories we pass through and those we avoid. The end of hegemonies. A contamination of every single Western leader by mere contact with Trump: how could we take seriously a head of state who appears to take this Donald seriously? What will come of the administration of things and the government of men when they no longer wear the impersonal mask of the State?

Dear cousins, we send you these thoughts from France as a way of saying you're not alone, regardless of whatever fate befalls us through our own electoral system over here in a few months.

describes the result: “Dualisms like man-woman, state-society, human-nature aim to portray hierarchical relationships as natural. What Thomas Hobbes called ‘homo homini lupus est’ to legitimize the unchallengeable leviathan called the state, is practiced big-brother style in our modern times.” (Homo homini lupus est was a Roman proverb meaning “A man is a wolf to another man.” Frans de Waal, a primatologist, points out that both wolves and humans are extremely social species. The proverb is based on inaccurate Western myths about wolves.)

Against this massive fraud, solidarity is our weapon. The violent imposition of these hierarchies were resisted from the start, and that resistance continues to this day. By better understanding how these hierarchies were constructed together, we can sharpen our arguments against the system of modern hierarchies, and better develop our methods of self-defense against its attacks.

This system began to come together in parts of the 15th-century Mediterranean region and western continental Europe, consolidated and developed existing hierarchies, and imposed itself around the world by blood-soaked conquest. The system is dynamic and adaptive, but from the beginning peoples’ actions have succeeded in slowing, stopping and even overthrowing it. Partly, the system was a counter-revolution to the intensity of anti-feudal struggles in the Late Middle Ages. Divisions were combined and recombined by rulers and managers over many generations of trial-and-error, reacting to generations of resistance. A particular relationship of oppressions developed in a small region and were globalized by colonialism. This system has its origins in war, as I will describe below; war is a critical component of this system; and this system constantly wages war against the dispossessed of the world; which is why, for short, I refer to this system as “the war machine.”

Contrary to its founding myths, capitalism did not naturally develop from the activities of peaceful traders, hardy pioneers and genius inventors. Rather, capitalism was only possible if imposed by force of arms: “capital’s economic power cannot exist without the support of extra-economic force; and extra-economic force is today, as before, primarily supplied by the state...capitalists ultimately depend on coercion by the state to underpin their economic powers and their hold on property, to maintain social order and conditions favorable to their accumulation.” The origin of the word “capitalism” points to the entanglement of capitalism with hierarchy, slavery, war, and states. “Capital” comes from the Latin word capita, which means “head,” referring to heads of livestock and slaves: a person’s movable wealth. Capita is also the root-word of “cattle,” “chattel,” and “capitol” (head of government, first used in 1699 to refer to the Virginia state houses, and first used for the U.S. Capitol in 1793 by Thomas Jefferson).

Ellen Wood defines capitalism as “a system in which all major economic actors are dependent on the market for their basic requirements of life. Other societies have had markets, often on a large scale; but only in capitalism is market dependence the fundamental condition of life for everyone.” The enclosure of

the commons across Europe, the conquest of the Americas, and the kidnapping of slaves from Africa — all by the force-of-arms of early modern states — both provided the primary “start-up capital” of capitalism, and created the conditions for capitalism to define our society.

The modern state, in turn, has always been the servant of war and capitalism, making it an ineffective tool for reform or liberation. This system incorporated patriarchy and invented white supremacy, and globalized both, using gender and race to justify a vast program of conquest, dispossession and genocide. Many claim that human life has progressively improved since the “Dark Ages.” But upon examination, this narrative of linear progress breaks down. The Late Middle Ages were a period of broad anti-feudal struggle, and wages were greatly boosted by the labor scarcity that followed the Black Death of 1346-1353. Silvia Federici describes how “for a broad section of the western European peasantry, and for urban workers, the 15th century was a period of unprecedented power...a standard of living unparalleled until the 19th century...by the end of the 15th century, a counter-revolution was already well under way at every level of social and political life.” State formation and conquest certainly made life worse for most peasants and indigenous peoples at the time. Nelson Mandela commented that “Poverty is not an accident. Like slavery and apartheid, it is man-made and can be removed by the actions of human beings.” This sets up a big question for us: how did poverty, slavery and apartheid, as well as patriarchy and militarism, become endemic in the modern era?



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FEAR AND LOATHING IN THE VALLEY OF THE MOON

an update on the struggle to save snoqualmie falls

On May 16th, 2016 (shortly after the printing of our last issue), a federal judge temporarily dismissed a racial discrimination lawsuit filed by the Snoqualmie Tribe against the City of Snoqualmie. The tribe alleged that the City had threatened to shut off water and sewage service to the Snoqualmie Casino, thus depriving the tribe of a major source of funds. The threat came after the City threatened to raise water rates 50%. The tribe alleged that the City of Snoqualmie had made this threat based on long standing racial prejudice. It was an open, transparent act the everyday racism that occurs in the Valley of the Moon.

Although the tribe is absolutely correct in their allegations, the federal judge did not side with them and dismissed their lawsuit. In response, the unremarkable white man who is the current mayor of the City of Snoqualmie told the press “*this lawsuit was never about discrimination. The City Council, the Administration, and our staff have always been committed to providing cost-effective utility services — fairly and without regard to race. The City wasn’t able to negotiate a long-term sewer contract extension when the other party was refusing to meet or negotiate, so it was only common sense for us to have said that ‘no negotiation means no contract means no future services.’ That was not discrimination, and we are pleased that the court recognized this.*”

In colonial double speak, the mayor stated that if the indigenous inhabitants wouldn’t come and treat with City Hall, then City Hall would shut off their services and force them to the negotiating table. In this regard, the City of Snoqualmie is engaged in the standard practice of colonial governance. Through intimidation and fear, they have coerced the Snoqualmie into a position they had no intention of being in. Despite how fervently the mayor may attempt to deny his racism and sliminess, this inept cretin will one day have to face the consequences of his actions.

In a display of total arrogance, the mayor told the media “*now that Judge Robart has rejected the Tribe’s discrimination claims, I’m hopeful the Tribe is now ready to get to the details of its casino, hotel, conference center and retail expansion plans, and the*

kind and amount of sewer service they need. I encourage the Tribe’s leadership to recognize that it makes more sense to do this in person rather than in a court room.”

The dispute between the tribe and the city began over a plan to develop the eastern slope above Snoqualmie Falls (covered in our previous issues). The tribe considers this waterfall to be the center of creation and have already seen it sullied by over a hundred years of colonial activity. Now that it is threatened by an even larger development, the tribe has organized to oppose it under the banner SAVE SNOQUALMIE FALLS.

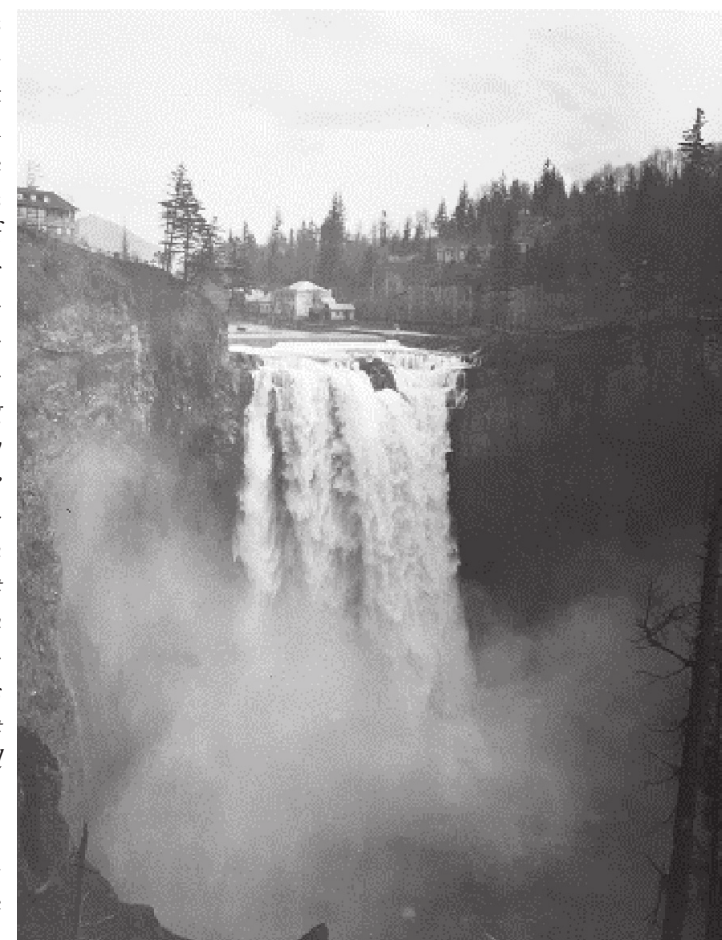
Despite all the rantings and raving of the scumbag mayor, the threat to shut off services to the Snoqualmie Casino was widely perceived to be retaliation against the tribe for opposing the development of the falls.

After this, the Snoqualmie Tribe filed another lawsuit against the city to stop the expansion. In that lawsuit, the tribe states that “*Snoqualmie oral tradition supports the existence of burials on the Morgan Parcel. An artifact was discovered on the Tokul Parcel and numerous archaeological sites have been documented on the vicinity of the project.*” An arrowhead over 4,000 years old was discovered near the proposed construction site, an archaeological find that was ignored by the city in their desire for development and money.

Very little changed over the summer in the Valley of the Moon, but something happened across the country that began to change conditions for the Sno-

qualmie Tribe. Hundreds of people began to arrive at the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in North Dakota, a territory inhabited by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. They came in order to oppose the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, a project that would deliver fracking oil from North Dakota to southern Illinois. Over the next months, opposition to the project increased and a giant encampment sprang up at the edge of the Standing Rock Sioux tribal lands. Multiple direct actions against the pipeline construction and clashes with the police have given this struggle international attention.

Within this context, the Snoqualmie Tribe decided to



meet with the mayor and city officials in September, 2016. It is unknown what exactly was discussed, nor is it known what the new utility rates will be but at the end of these closed meetings a tribal representative released the following statement: *"I think very good things came out of that session that will be good for the tribe and the city, It's our further hope that we can really use this process and this agreement to spring forward on other things that we can work on in a mutually beneficial fashion... I personally feel we are moving forward in the right direction and taking very positive steps."*

The tribe dropped its racial discrimination lawsuit against the City of Snoqualmie after this announcement and sewage services were guaranteed for the next four years at rates acceptable to the tribe. However, despite this temporary appeasement to the city, the Snoqualmie Tribe have not dropped their lawsuit to block construction above Snoqualmie Falls. If the city pushes forward with these plans, a conflict similar to Standing Rock would undoubtedly develop in the Valley of the Moon. Should the tribe ask for help in the future, we ask our readers to lend them support in what will be a long and important battle to save a center of creation from the ravages of capitalism and greed.

Two months after this announcement, on November 21, 2016, twenty tribes from Washington State signed a collective letter expressing their support of Standing Rock. A portion of the statement reads *"we support their call to deny the easement of the Dakota Access Pipeline and to reroute the pipeline away from tribal lands, waters and sacred places."* The Snoqualmie Tribe was a signatory to this statement, and we provide a full list to show the combined strength of the indigenous tribes whose lands we inhabit without permission:

The Lummi Nation, Nooksack Tribe; Sauk Suiattle Tribe; Upper Skagit Tribe; Tulalip Tribes; Stillaguamish Tribe; Puyallup Tribe; Nisqually Tribe; Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe; Suquamish Tribe; Squaxin Island Tribe; Chehalis Tribe; Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe; Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe; Makah Tribe; Hoh Tribe; Quileute Tribe; Quinault Tribe; Snoqualmie Tribe; Cowlitz Tribe; Shoalwater Bay Tribe; Yakama Nation; Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation; Spokane Tribe of Indians; Kalispell Tribe; Samish Nation, and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians.



FOR MORE INFO:

savesnoqualmiefalls.org

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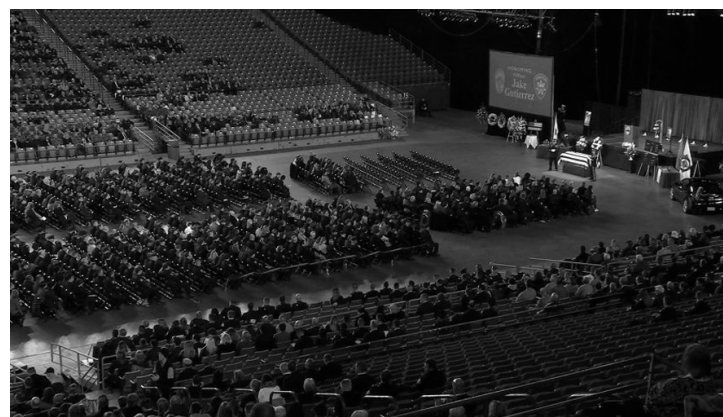
news from nowhere

NOVEMBER 15, 2016:

The train tracks through the city of Bellingham were blocked for four hours by a crowd of over two hundred people. This action was taken on a national day of solidarity with Standing Rock. There were no arrests.

NOVEMBER 30, 2016:

A Tacoma Police Department officer was shot and killed after responding to reports of a domestic dispute. Acting in their typical, vengeful fashion, the police killed the 38 year old shooter in front his children. The police and media would later claim he used them as human shields. Several days after the shooting, local and national police staged a vehicle procession to honor the fallen officer that was sparsely attended. This procession was then followed by a ceremony in which supposedly "thousands" of people paid their respects. However, as the below picture illustrates, the police don't have many friends these days:



DECEMBER 3, 2016

To make matters even worse for the local police, a Pierce County Sheriff's station in Bonney Lake (outside Tacoma), was shot up in the middle of the night by an unknown person who remains at liberty. No one was injured in the attack and five bullet holes were later found in the station. This attack prompted a genius at the Sheriff's Department to determine it was most likely done by someone with a *"a grudge against us personally or police in general."* A department spokesperson also hypothesized about how the present moment might appear to be *"an opportune time to strike out at law enforcement."* In this one instance, the sheriff is absolutely correct.

CAPITALISM IS A WAR MACHINE

THE INVENTION OF PROPERTY

The classic definition of a state is a group of institutions that successfully organizes "a monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory." The state is an abstract, a principle, a social construct, a network of relationships. Government is the organization, usually a hierarchy and a bureaucracy, which physically enforces this monopoly and determines whether any given use of violence is legitimate or illegitimate. As any conservative will tell you, the state's primary role is "national security" — the state must maintain itself against existential threats. This is traditionally known as *raison d'État*, or "reason of state." It follows that the state must reproduce itself, so the state must serve as enforcer of the economic system of its territory.

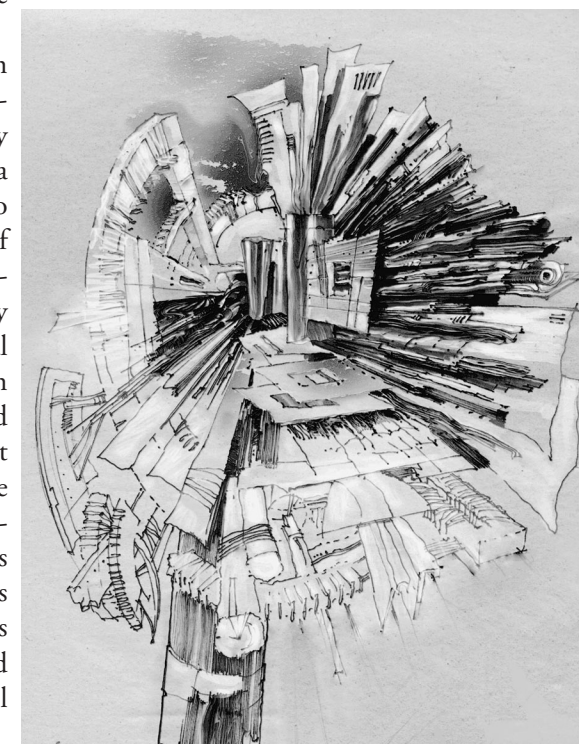
Most prominently, the modern state fulfills this role by using its monopoly on violence to enforce property law. Colin Ward defines the state as "a political mechanism using force, and to the sociologist it is one of many forms of social organization. It is, however, 'distinguished from all other associations by its exclusive investment with the final power of coercion.' And against whom is this final power directed? It is directed at the enemy without, but it is aimed at the subject society within... War is the expression of the state in its most perfect form: it is its finest hour." The state's exercise of force against external threats and its internal use of force are two sides of the same coin; and when one method fails to maintain the state's power, it will turn to the other method.

The regime of state and property was first developed by the Romans, as described by Ellen Meiksins Wood: "Unlike other imperial states whose overbearing power tended to impede the development of private property, the Roman Empire consolidated the rule of property as an alternative locus of power apart from the state. This combination of imperial state and strong private property was reflected in the Roman law, which produced both a distinctive conception of absolute private property (*dominium*) — very different from the loose conceptions of possession characteristic, for example, of the ancient Greeks — and also something approaching a notion of sovereignty (*imperium*) — a public right of command attached to civil magistrates and then the emperor — which distinguished Roman ideas of the state from the Greek idea of the polis as simply the community of citizens. While the conception of *dominium* and *imperium* had roots in the Republic, they de-

veloped in tandem and came to fruition in the administration of the Empire by means of the alliance between property and state."

The Roman property concept was incidentally revived by the Catholic Church in the eleventh century. Many legal scholars, most prominently Harold J. Berman in *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition*, "trace the origins of capitalism in Europe to the institutional reforms of Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085), who tried to separate the church from secular authority, and, at the same time, to centralize power within the church. To govern the newly independent church entity, these Gregorian reforms gave rise to the new canon law, which shortly thereafter served as a model for new secular legal

systems, including laws establishing and governing the activities of other corporate groups, and laws controlling trade activities (*lex mercatoria*). These secular laws, it is argued, allowed the establishment of the economic institutions and practices that eventually led to capitalism." This was the legal forerunner for the modern state as the consolidation of political and economic power, following the Imperial Roman model.



THE WAR MACHINE

Modern hierarchies are bound together, both in their present relationships, and in their origin. The entangled oppressions that continually divide and conquer us have persisted for centuries. The divide-and-conquer strategy requires the creation of categories, often binaries: man/woman, faithful/heathen, white/

black, citizen/foreigner, traditional/modern, straight/gay, and so on. These binaries are, primarily, political fictions. Feminist writer Silvia Federici points out, the "project of domination... can sustain itself only by dividing, on a continually renewed basis, those it intends to rule." This is one of the core arguments of Federici's book *Caliban and the Witch*: "primitive accumulation," the origin of capitalism, was "above all an accumulation of differences, inequalities, hierarchies, divisions, which have alienated workers from each other and even from themselves." The deepening and entanglement of patriarchy, states, capitalism, and bigotry were not coincidental, but the product of a process by elites consolidating their power. Howard Zinn describes such elite coordination as "not a conscious conspiracy, but an accumulation of tactical responses."

Dilar Dirik, a Kurdish Women's Movement organizer,

eration for both the Olympia Police Department and the Thurston County Sheriff. It involved the Union Pacific Railroad Police Department, various City of Olympia employees, and an unmarked FBI surveillance plane.

Despite all this, a group of people in masks blocked the garbage trucks and forklifts entering the camp, they climbed over the equipment like wild animals, they ran from police pepper-balls and concussion grenades. People screamed at the police with all of their hatred and anger. They built barricades and lit fires in the streets, they chased unmarked police cars away, they tried to hold the tracks for as long as possible. But once the barricade was cleared two lines of riot police escorted the engine out of Olympia. They shot anyone who tried to climb on the train, the beat anyone who came close, they outnumbered the small number of masked rebels who held the streets until the sun came up and the morning commute began. Those lucky drivers were treated to a rare sight in Olympia. It is not every morning that the cops and the sheriff have to escort a train out of town.

This type of thing is only going to keep happening. It cost the city tens of thousands of dollars to clear the camp. The economic impact on the Port of Olympia is not fully clear. The ILWU longshoremen feel their jobs are being threatened, the conservative Port Commissioners want all commodities to be able to come through, the friendly Port Commissioner wants to ban all petroleum related products, and the hydraulic fracking proppants now sit under tarps waiting to be loaded for the next shipment. Nothing has moved since the blockade. The proppants are still there.

In the middle of the encampment, a conservative senator from Ferndale (north of Bellingham) told the media he was going to introduce a bill against what he called “economic terrorism.” This senator believes that anyone who stops commerce in any way is an “economic terrorist.” This senator also happens to have been the Trump campaign manager for the State of Washington. While the blockade was ongoing, a rumor circulated that a trainload of sugar had been unable to reach a Pepsi

manufacturing plant because of the barricade. A small rail spur extends off the Union Pacific line at precisely the spot where the encampment was located. This spur is owned by the Genesee-Wyoming Railroad and travels through Olympia into the neighboring city of Tumwater.

The spur does not go directly into any Pepsi manufacturing plant or bottling facility. However, it does service the plastic company (AMCOR) that provides the bottles in which the locally produced Pepsi products are distributed. Oddly enough, all of the Pepsi products in Thurston, Pierce, and south Mason counties are manufactured in and distributed out of the Mottman Industrial Park in Olympia (by L & E Bottling Co.).

This Genesee-Wyoming rail spur also services a metal company, a pipe company, and a Boneville Power Administration electrical substation. One small disturbance on the railway was enough to threaten all of this. Whether in North Dakota or Washington, someone clearly called in a favor to the Trump-loving senator from Ferndale and the result is this “economic terrorism” bill. It is unlikely to pass, given that the Washington House of Representatives is still controlled by the Democrats. In the unlikely event that it does pass the House, the Democratic governor has no desire to reward the

local campaign manager for Donald Trump by signing his bill into law.

We are living in a changed context, more volatile and dangerous, but also rife with possibility. The encampment and blockade in Olympia is a perfectly contained, easily replicated model that can be used to stop petroleum from moving across rail lines. What allowed it to work was the intention of staying. There were no leaders to manage what happened, no professional activists taking charge. For those six days, everyone saw functioning, militant, conscious anarchism in play. All six days of it were glorious. Those six days will last forever once enough of you get the memo. Good luck.



LETTER TO OUR AMERICAN COUSINS

Today, rare are those who know still what the State and politics (and thus 'history') are, or rather were.

-Alexandre Kojève to Carl Schmitt, June 28, 1955

So yeah, the Joker seized the White House. It wasn't part of the script. It didn't take a truck loaded with explosives, and there was no countdown on an LCD screen. He simply showed up to the elections, as democratically as could be, and he won.

The news was greeted with universal incredulity, painful for some, triumphant for others. In this world, for a truth to rise up and present itself is always an event. It is therefore customary to swiftly bury it under dump trucks of “commentary,” “explanation” and other chatter. We dismiss the fact that it happened on the grounds that it should not have happened, that it was an accident. The problem is that, as the accident becomes the rule, as Brexit prevails in the United Kingdom and bloody Duterte in the Philippines, it likewise becomes increasingly difficult to mask the unreality of all that “should have been.” To disqualify as “fascist” the result of procedures that one otherwise considers “democratic” only adds to the dishonesty and aberration.

Let us instead take the presidential election of Donald Trump as a moment of truth. Let us formulate the truths, old or new, that follow from it. Let us look at the reality that arrays itself therein, and take our bearings within it.

1. An election is not a “democratic” procedure. It was practiced in all varieties of monarchical regimes. The Pope is elected. Universal suffrage is a plebiscitary procedure. The plebiscite has always been favored by dictators. The first “democratically elected” President in France was the dictator Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte.

2. Dictatorship is an institution, and not the negation of every institution. It was invented by the Roman republic as the most effective means of confronting emergency situations—a pleb secession, for example. If the dictator is granted full powers, it is for the sake of saving the Republic or restoring the “normal situation.” Dictatorship is a republican institution.

3. Politics is essentially the art of manipulating appearances, of subterfuge, strategems, the game of alliance and betrayal, of the permanent coup d'Etat, of bad faith and domination—in short, it is the art of effective lies. What could be more logical than electing a patented liar as president? Those who regard this election

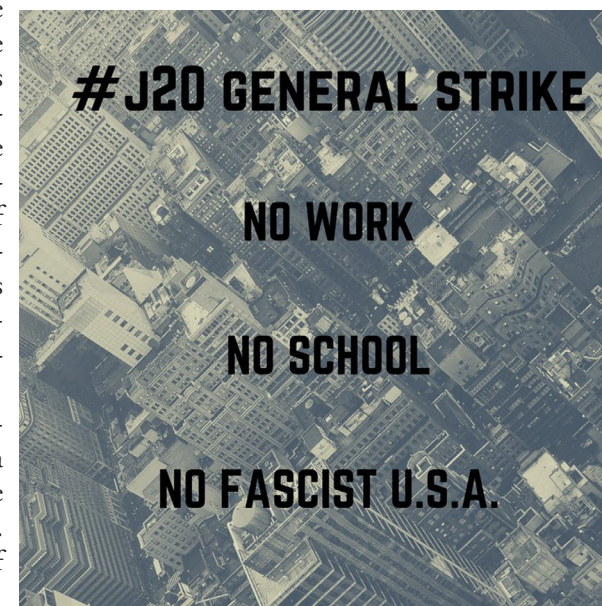
as the triumph of a “post-truth politics” simply because the current winner doesn't “respect the facts” only obscure the obvious, which is that if Donald Trump was elected it was precisely because he embodies the truth of politics, the truth of its lie. The reason why the Left is so roundly detested is that it lies about the lie by attempting to do politics in good faith. Each time that the Left attacks Trump's obscenities, it only further exposes the smarmy character of its own moralism. The polite restraint of which the Left boasts keeps it at an equally polite distance from the truth, which only prolongs the reign of lies. This helps to explain why some regard Trump as the end of the lie. All that's missing is for them to read their Gracian, who once wrote of the man of the court that, “when his artifice is seen, his dissimulation reaches a higher pitch, and he tries to deceive by means of truth itself. He changes both his game and his weapons, in order to change his ruse. His artifice is to no longer have one.”

4. If governing today consists principally in the act of enunciating the emergency; if politicians do little more than play their part in a sort of spectacular distraction accessible to all; if they do so only to postpone, day after day, our consideration of the whole range of vital questions whose unresolved state undermines our existence; if the exercise of state power offers nothing but a lure enjoining those who possess real power, because they have real interests in the world, to continue to serve them; if, therefore, government is no longer in the government, if its palaces stand empty; then it is entirely

reasonable to elect a professional reality tv star president. A clown is quite simply the best candidate to play the principal role in a clown theater.

5. For as long as “democracy has been in crisis,” experts have lost themselves in superfluous ruminations over “votes of confidence,” “protest votes” and the like. They ought to add one more to their list of bankrupt categories: the “vote of contempt.” It should not be ignored that a whole host of libertarian enemies of government voted for Trump. To place a contemptible being in a role one holds in contempt, to put a grotesque character at the head of a body one takes to be superfluous, is there a more effective way to display its inanity? To elect nothing as president is simply one more way of annihilating the presidential function. It leaves us at liberty to believe ourselves clever, while deriding the triumph of “idiocracy”.

6. The encounter with the White Man left an enduring memo-



THE OLYMPIA COMMUNE AND THE BLOCKADE OF THE PORT

It started out simply enough. Someone ran in front of the tracks and stopped a train. The grain cars attached to the engine were going to be filled with proppants for oil fracking and shipped off to North Dakota. It wasn't difficult to stop the engine, but there was no one else around, just two workers from the train company guiding the engine into the Port of Olympia. It was the afternoon of November 7, 2016.



One of these workers wore a t-shirt with the Weyland-Yutani corporate logo written on it. This is a fictional corporation from the movie *Aliens*. In those films, Weyland-Yutani is desperate to get its hands on the perfect weapon: a black, snake-like alien that stands taller than a person and has acid for blood. This alien weapon brings only death. It cannot be controlled. It will destroy anyone who tries to harness it. The train company worker wore this Weyland-Yutani shirt without affect or self-consciousness. He was simply doing his job.

His coworker pleaded for the person to get off the tracks, he claimed they were only in Olympia to pick up some organic corn. This train worker was obviously lying. There was no one else around to help block the tracks and the police were sure to come so the person ran away. At that point, word of the shipment had gone out and people began to arrive with signs, face masks, and banners. While the train engine was being coupled to the grain cars, the blockade of the train tracks grew to almost one hundred people. When the train finally tried to leave the Port of Olympia, there were far too many people for the police to handle and the train was backed up.

The worker with the Weyland-Yutani shirt rode on the front of the engine through the gates of the port. He and his coworker went home eventually, having not lost any wages and perhaps even garnered some overtime. Inside the gates of the port, the ILWU longshoreman had already been paid for loading the proppants into several grain cars and were home for the evening. The only people complaining at the moment was the fracking company in North Dakota, the politicians at the Port of Olympia, the Union Pacific Railroad, and a company called Rainbow Ceramics in China. In this manner, the



blockade of the port began.

First a pile of rocks were stacked on the railway. These rocks were considered private property by the owners of Acme Fuel Co., the propane business adjacent to the blockade. The owners returned their private rocks to their private drainage gutter, but at that point a private citizen had brought their private couch to the private railroad tracks to block the private fracking proppants bound for North Dakota. All the while a private FBI surveillance plane circled the blockade, sucking up all digital communications.

Over the course of the day and on into the evening,

the barricade grew to include tents, tables, food, music, and more couches. Every resource available began to flow from every person who wanted to stop the shipment of proppants and help the indigenous warriors assembled in North Dakota. Olympia sprang into motion as it has in the past, with every sympathetic house coming to life. The

small locality spread information within itself, it assembled what was needed, it prepared itself for a long struggle. The Olympia Co-Op donated food, as did several other small businesses, and there was widespread support for the blockade among the local population.

The Olympia Police Department employs around 60 officers. On a random day, only half of them are on duty in a city of 50,000 people. Once the blockade was established, the Olympia Police Department simply didn't have enough officers to do anything about it. Their only option would be to ask for mutual aid from the Thurston County Sheriff's Department. However, there are only 54 sheriff's employed by the department and on a random day only half of them are presiding over 700 square miles of land. All of these officers would have been necessary to clear the blockade, leaving the entire county vulnerable to every sort of crime and disorder. It



would ultimately take them six days to assemble the necessary resources.

During the first night of the blockade, a poor man who lived in a nearby shack walked down the railroad tracks towards the encampment. He approached the sound van and got into a fight with several people. Once he was taken away from the barricade, a few people tried to talk with him. The man claimed it was not a protest, that it was a party. He claimed everyone was part of the Illuminati, that they were sent to discredit real protest. When he was told that the Illuminati were not real, that the Illuminati was in fact just a centuries-old monarchist slur used against anyone who threatened

their arbitrary authority, the man did not know how to respond. Unfortunately, another argument began after this and the homeless man said to the assembled crowd "mock me some more!"

The next morning he reappeared and began throwing rocks and slashing at tents with a knife. He claimed that the barricade was going to result in the police evicting him from his shack along the railroad tracks. After he was talked down from this conclusion, those assembled decided to move the camp further down the tracks. All of the couches and supplies were moved by foot and by car five blocks to the south. It was rainy and miserable that morning, everyone was delirious, but soon there were strings being tied onto every pole and in every direction. Tarps were hung up against the rain, all the tents and gear was sorted, and more people began to arrive. By the middle of the day, a massive impediment was placed along the tracks. Made of palates, soil, couches, rocks, and wood, it seemed to grow on its own, culled from supplies gathered across town by countless hands.

People began to wear masks inside the camp. This was never questioned, given the constant surveillance of the barricade. Informal assemblies would occur, mostly based

on need. Different committees were formed, the majority of them informal. The construction committee appeared but its purpose was soon diffused. Everyone built everything. The other committees fluctuated, consensus was never forced among the group, and an anarchist encampment was successfully established. Security was a matter for all and the dreaded "peace and safety committee" never managed to form. Only later, towards the end of the blockade, did the assembly become formalized.

A small faction of people began to spread a non-violent discourse in the camp. They demanded the blockade issue a letter of apology to "the indigenous" for endangering their struggle with reckless action. They demanded that the camp officially accept non-violence as its ideology. They claimed certain people were initiators of "violence" and tried to disempower the encampment through guilt based identity politics meant to cause paralysis and inaction.

These efforts were ultimately counteracted, in large part due to the presence of indigenous people who were very

pleased with the blockade and wished it to continue. Several members of local and distant tribes had already addressed



the camp and expressed their gratitude, but for some reason this small faction of non-violent activists insisted something was wrong. The formal assembly was the only venue through which this faction could attempt to implement its ideology. Like all politicians, they need a legislature to legislate. Without this, their ability to act crumbles. These attempts at co-optation consumed two entire evenings worth of discussion. In total, the encampment lasted six days. Had those final nights been free of this bureaucratic constraint, the encampment would have been better able to prepare for what was coming.

The morning of November 17, 2016 was a delirium, half-dream, half-hallucination. Screams filled the air once the riot cops entered the camp. There were dozens of these cops, almost a hundred, and there were less than twenty people guarding the tracks. Group by group, people in masks left their houses and gathered along the edge of the police lines. The camp was entirely surrounded, there was no way to get close to those trapped inside. This was a huge op-